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State Times

P. O. BOX 1819

JACKSON, MISSISSIPPI

OLIVER EMMERICH
EDITOR

February 4, 1959

Dr. James W. Silver
The University of Mississippi
College of Liberal Arts
University, Mississippi

Dear Dr. Silver:

I am too far behind on my correspondence to seem courteous. However, I have been wanting to take time off to reply to your appreciated letters.

Think nothing of any reports regarding the meeting in Fulton Chapel. I was disappointed that there were so many conflicts and that the crowd was small. From McComb to Oxford and return is a 530 mile trip.

Regarding my text and my optimism. While we must study the past we must look to the future. In my opinion Mississippi is a frontier of opportunity. Our total economy will be doubled within the next decade.

What people thought about the War Between the States before it happened, who would win, etc., is irrelevant in this day with a dynamic future ahead. We paid dearly for our mistakes of 100 years ago.

The emotional problems of this hour, reflected in our reaction to racial problems, is historic. Wisdom could have predicted 100 years ago our reaction to problems today.

I am mailing you a copy of reprints of a series of editorials. These editorials pretty well reflect my thinking on the situation confronting us.

You refer to the Negro child who died of exposure in Jackson. You say there is much misery in Mississippi. What you infer is true. But we should consider how far we have traveled in the past quarter of a century. The misery to which you refer reflects the imperfection of society, not the lack of amazing progress.

We discussed several subjects when together. And your letters touched on a number of challenging things which interested me very much.

Regarding your first letter: Admittedly all farmers must go along with a federal farm program once it is voted up. But this does not make it right. When a small cotton farmer is limited to less than five acres in cotton he is denied the right to make a living. The poverty thus bestowed is wrong no matter how many other farmers have compelled him to conform.

I favor a right-to-work law for the reason that a man has a constitutional right to work without being compelled to join a union. You or I would feel abused if we were compelled to join the Baptist church or the Chamber of Commerce even though they are good organizations. Afterall, why should any workman be compelled to bow to Hoffa in order to hold a job?

I do not think that industry is not brought to Mississippi because of underpaid workers as you say. Industry has vastly increased the pay of laborers in our state. Without industry pay today would be much lower.

Industry is moving South because of a growing Southern market, the industrial advantages of the South as reflected in climate and water, and because of its rebellion to interference with management by organized labor in other areas.

In time the labor of the South will be organized. Meanwhile, I think labor will build the kind of leadership which will recognize that problems of labor, management stockholders and consumers are mutual. During the transition between an unorganized Southland and an organized Southland many new industries will come this way.

The building of better labor leadership in this transition will in time, I think, stabilize relationships between labor and management. During this transition the South will grow. By the time the South's labor is organized we will be over the hump so to speak. Anyway, it's an idea.

I must say that I know of some Mississippi industries without labor unions that pay higher wages for the same labor expended in plants that have organized labor.

Big business dominated American politics 50 years or more ago. The atrocities of that time were horrible. Today big labor is in the saddle. I do not like the idea of big business, big labor, big government or anything big or small dominating American life.

Labor put pressure upon management. Management found new ways of increasing production through the ingenuity of science and engineering. Better wages were made possible. Today our problem is to meet the threat of higher wages without an accompanying increase in production. It is a real threat.

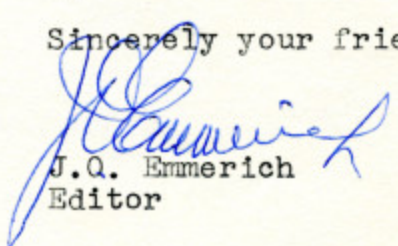
As an editor and college professor we must agree that we have but one problem -- ignorance. To help solve this problem we have college professors and editors. We must be patient for were it not for this problem you and I might be without our jobs.

Thanks so much for your appreciated letters. I fear my letter may sound dogmatic. If it does please know that in my heart I know that there is so little that I really know.

The wisest man in Greece was Socrates, so Socrates said. He considered himself wise because he knew that he was one man in Greece that knew how ignorant he was of the great problems of the world.

With warm personal regards, I am

Sincerely your friend,



J.Q. Emmerich
Editor

JOE:sw